

# NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER – 2015

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

With the Annual Meeting taking place this week and budgets being prepared for 2016, October always is a month to look back and review what we have accomplished at the Genesee County Chamber of Commerce this past year. And each year it never ceases to amaze me how much has taken place during the past 12 months.

The most visible accomplishments are naturally are signature events. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Awards Night was held in February at The Clarion Hotel and over 300 people attended as we honored this year's award winners Applied Business Systems, Muller Quaker Dairy, Corcoran Custom Services, Merrill Lynch, Genesee Cancer Assistance, Peggy Lamb and Bill Schutt. This is always a special night and 2015 was no exception.

In March over 400 people turned out for the 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Celebrate Agriculture Dinner at the Alexander Fire Hall. The Chamber co-sponsors this event with the Genesee County Cornell Cooperative Extension, Genesee County Soil & Water and the Farm Bureau and it is always a sellout, probably due to the awesome food that is served.

March also saw the Chamber's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Home Show at the Falletti Ice Arena. This year's Home Show was even more successful than the first with all 94 vendor booths sold out and nearly 2,000 people attending.

The 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Golf Tournament was held on a warm summer day in July. This year's tournament had a new twist as a Bocce tournament was held for the first time which pushed attendance to over 100. This is always a fun day of casual networking and we're expecting the Bocce tournament to continue to grow this event the next few years.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Decision Maker's Agri-Business Tour took place in September with presentations by Farm Credit, Batavia Downs and New York Craft Malt. Over 40 people attended this year's tour which is always a fascinating reminder of the impact that agriculture – our county's number one industry – has on our region.

There were a number of other events throughout the year as well. The Chamber was involved in ribbon cutting at Upstate Toyota Scion, Affordable Floor Cover, Ziebart and Batavia Foot Care Center. We were at Darien Lake to help announce their two new rides – Rolling Thunder and Brain Drain. There were fun networking Business After Hours events at Reed eye Associates, O'Lacy's and T-Shirts Etc.

We launched a series of monthly business workshops in conjunction with the Small Business Administration in 2015. Our Small Business Loan Program has approved \$65,000 in low-interest loans and grants to qualified applicants this year.

The Chamber sponsored and coordinated three travel trips – National Parks of America, Spain and the Portuguese Riviera and Thailand/Hong Kong.

A special section tabloid called "The Chamber Connection" was published in The Daily News in October. The tab highlighted many of the accomplishments of the Chamber and its members.

So there has been a lot going on at your Chamber of Commerce this year – and I haven't even mentioned what might be the most significant undertaking of the year. The Chamber's Board of Directors formed a task force to look into a possible new location for the Chamber office and a Genesee County Visitors Centers.

The task force quickly identified 8276 Park Road (the former Sport Plus Physical Therapy building next to The Clarion Hotel) as an ideal location and has taken steps to purchase and renovate the property to suit our needs. With over 800 hotel rooms within ½ mile and nearby destinations like Batavia Downs, Alex's Place, the Palm Island Indoor Water Park and the Veterans Memorial Drive shopping centers, the new Visitors Center will be a perfect position to attract out-of-town visitors and drive them deeper into the county, thus stimulating business throughout our region.

As you can tell by now, a lot has been going on at your Genesee County Chamber of Commerce and next year promises to be even more exciting. Thank you for your support during the past year and we at the Chamber look forward to working with you again in 2016.

Have a great month!

*Tom Turnbull*

Tom Turnbull  
Chamber President